Community Redevelopment Agency 2021-2022 Strategy

Adopted Vision for Downtown

(2018 Downtown Clearwater Redevelopment Plan)

"Downtown Clearwater will thrive as the **urban core and heart** of the City, as the center of business and government, and as an attractive place to *live, work, shop and play*. A revitalized Downtown will be achieved through quality urban design, **continued creation of a high-quality public realm**, and a dense and livable pattern which will strengthen the overall health of the City."

Desired Outcome

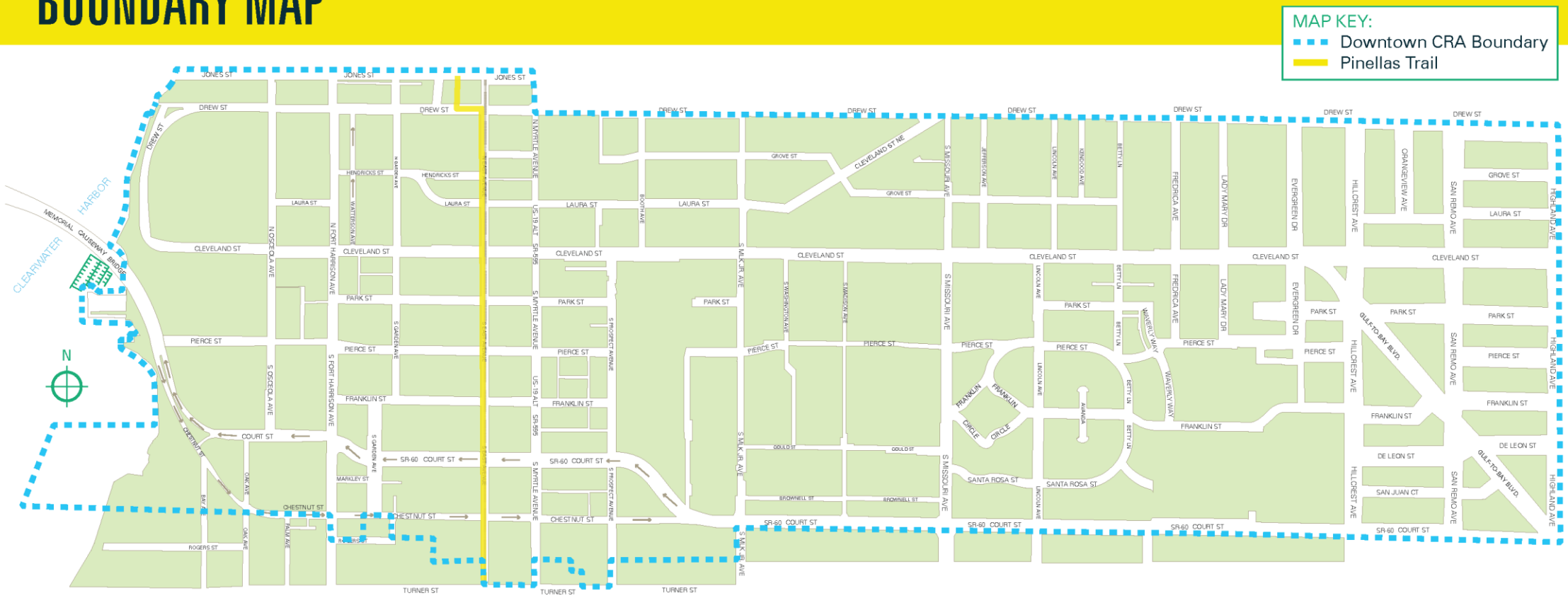
Create lasting change in downtown by *shifting the perceptions* held by the public and investors about city government and downtown Clearwater to one that aligns with the adopted downtown vision.

CRA Operational Requirements

- State Statute
- Local Ordinances
- 2018 Redevelopment Plan
- Strategy (Short Term Implementation Plan)
- Annual Budget and CIP programs

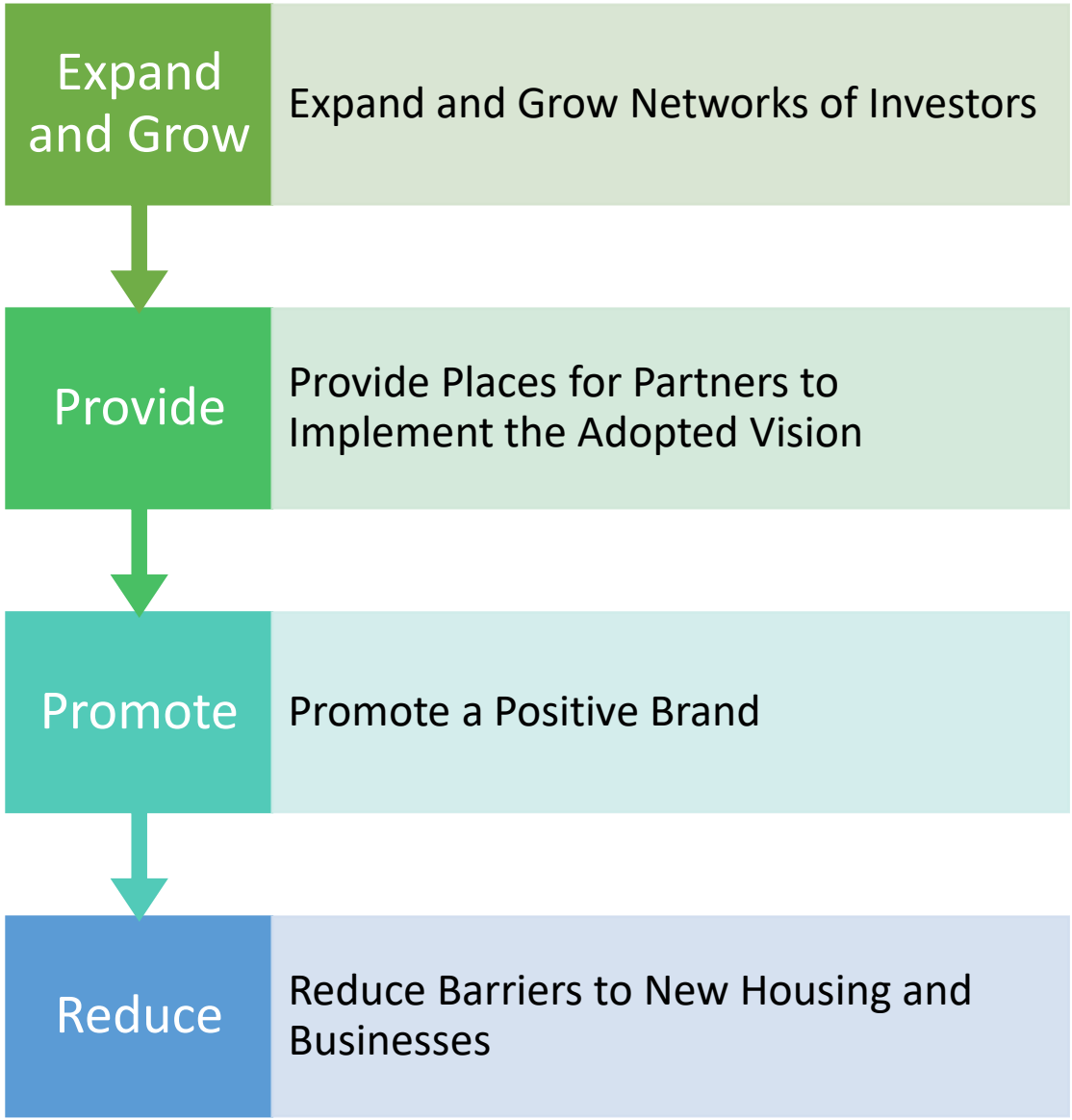
Commitment to a strategy and funding priorities allows staff to successfully plan for multi-year projects and communicate potential CRA investments to its partners.

BOUNDARY MAP



COMMUNITY REDEVELOPMENT AGENCY DISTRICT

How the CRA Facilitates Change



It takes everyone to revitalize a downtown

- Government & Development Authorities
- Downtown Advocacy Organizations
- Residents
- Property Owners
- Non-profit Service Providers
- Artists & Cultural Institutions
- Private Investors & Lenders
- Businesses & Entrepreneurs

Impacts on CRA Operations

COVID – 19

Construction of waterfront and streetscapes

New trustees

Funding for workforce housing

Focus Areas

1

Create and Share Positive, Authentic Stories about Downtown Clearwater

2

Increase Investor Confidence

3

Invest in Placemaking and Placekeeping

Create and Share Positive, Authentic Stories

Focus Area 1: Objectives

1

Increase the number and diversity of individuals and organizations producing community engagement activities and special events in downtown

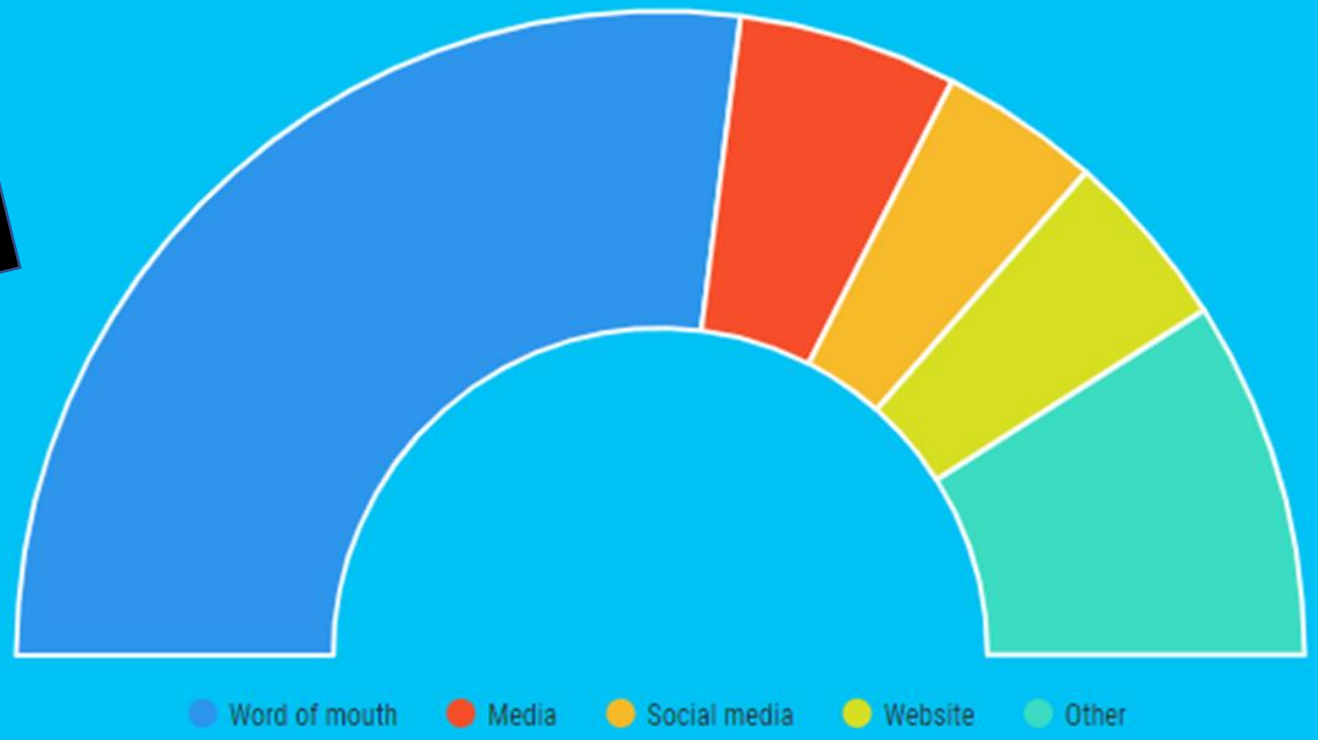
2

Increase the overall audience size and audience engagement of the CRA's electronic communications channels

3

Establish a resident engagement program to build community-wide support for downtown redevelopment goals and businesses

Survey results



Focus Area 1: CRA Actions

- Targeted Marketing Campaigns
- Facilitate the Production of Special Events
- Conduct Sentiment Analysis
- Start a Downtown Champions Program
- Provide Marketing Assistance to Small Businesses

Approach to Special Events

- Partner with community organizations to solicit different event ideas
- virtual programming
- large visual art installations
- Leverage the Cleveland Street closure
- Cease funding for large events (500+ attendees)

Sentiment analysis and narrative change

Measuring narrative change

- Ad-hoc (anecdotal)
- Automated (surveys and metrics reporting)
- Programmable (brand managers, social media monitoring)

Long-term change requires 50,000-foot and 50-foot views

- Identifying key sources of information
  - Media
  - Local leaders
  - Word of mouth

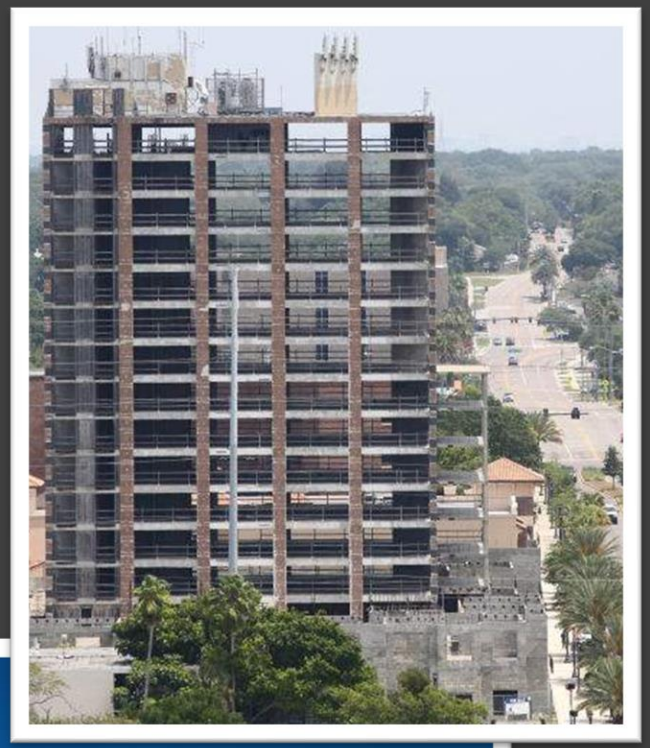
Sentiment analysis

POSITIVE

NEGATIVE

NEUTRAL

- Surveys at and post-events or programs
- Media mentions (quantity and quality)
- Social media comments (detect emotions and impressions)



Increase Investor Confidence

Focus Area 2: Objectives

1

Attract $50 million dollars in private investment

2

Approve development agreements for the sale or lease of a minimum of three CRA owned properties

3

Build operational capacity of a minimum of three downtown business/community advocacy organizations

4

Reduce the number of ground floor, vacant commercial buildings by 10%

What are investors looking for?

- Downtown Brand?
- Foot Traffic & Vehicular Traffic
- Lease rate per square foot
- Proof of Concept
- Experiences of Current Businesses
- Available Land/Buildings
- Zoning Entitlements

What causes persistent vacancy in Clearwater?

- Investors don’t know about downtown
- Land value is worth more than building, so owner holds out for land assembly and demolition *(Unintended consequence of higher density zoning)*
- Lender not willing to finance because costs of rehabilitation exceeds the revenue a tenant will be able to generate
- Owner wants a higher lease/sale amount than market will support
- Unable to attract tenants/buyers with financial resources
- Owner can afford to wait and/or is highly risk adverse
- Most vacant buildings need significant renovation or buildout $500,000 or more

Focus Area 2: CRA Actions

- OZ Advertising Campaigns and Events
- Redevelopment of CRA and City Owned Properties
- Business Assistance Grants for Building Improvements
- Monthly CRA Business Meeting
- DDB Grant Programs
- Capacity Building for Downtown Organizations

115 S. Martin Luther King, Jr. Avenue

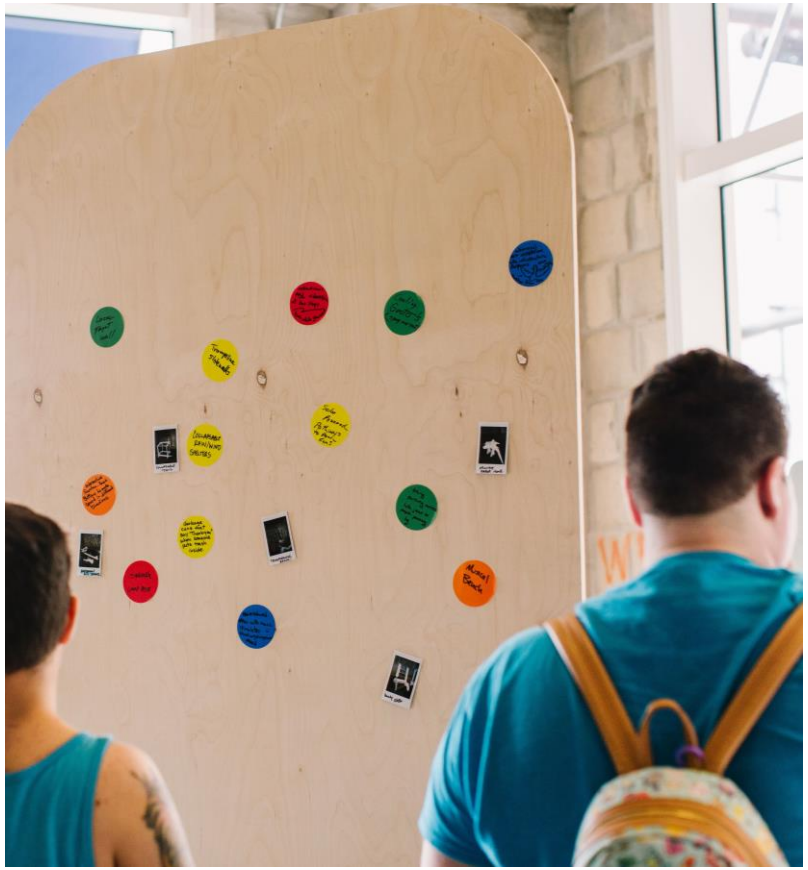
- Restaurant, brewpub, microbrewery
- Brewery plus compost site
- Office with park component
- Neighborhood gathering space
- $250,000 in incentive funds
- Façade grant program

Mixed Income Apartments

Cultural & Entertainment Uses

Retaining Current Restaurant/Retail

Live/Work/Play



Invest in Placemaking & Placekeeping

Focus Area 3: Objectives

1

Complete identified capital improvement projects

2

Develop three signature placemaking programs with a focus on children, downtown employees and the intersection of art and technology

3

Improve the physical appearance of blighted residential and commercial properties

Art and Tech

- What sets downtown apart: Intersection of art, humanities and technology
- USF Access 3D Lab augmented reality of CRA murals
- Gamification of public spaces: Driving downtown as a destination and encouraging exploration through technology
- Interactive Cleveland Street Lighting Project

Focus Area 3: CRA Actions

- Wayfinding
- Mercado/Streetscape Phase III
- Cleveland Lighting Project
- Recruiting Cultural & Entertainment Providers
- Community Engagement Programs
- Public Art Programs
- Cleveland Street Temporary Closure Programming
- Community Policing and Codes Enforcement

Are we changing the perception of downtown?

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